

# Styles of Catering Operations



Catering operations, as either a stand-alone facility or as part of a larger hospitality-related business, exist in a wide variety of formats, or styles. Most common are those that are readily identifiable as private rooms in restaurant operations, hotel facilities, and independent catering facilities. The increased demand by the international public for private function space outside of their own homes and businesses has led the catering segment of the foodservice sector of the hospitality industry to be a leader in the continued growth of both facilities and revenue.

Forward thinking foodservice businesses from fine dining restaurants to delicatessens are incorporating catering services into their operations in recognition of the expanding market for preprepared foodservices. Off-premise catering and take-out services offer an excellent avenue for increasing revenue with minimal costs.

This chapter summarizes the ways in which catering services have been incorporated into foodservice operational styles, providing operators with techniques and methods for expanding the profit making potential of their businesses. The categories of foodservice operations offering catering reviewed in this chapter are:

1. Full-service restaurants
2. Hotel food and beverage facilities
3. Catering halls
4. Independent caterers
5. Private clubs
6. Contract feeding
7. Charcuteries and delicatessens

“Services” in the context of a foodservice operation refer to the opportunities management makes available to the customer to purchase food, beverage, entertainment, and ancillary services. Services include:

1. Table foodservices
2. Packaged take-out foodservices
3. Beverage services
4. Entertainment services
5. Business meeting services
6. Conference and convention services
7. Contract feeding services
8. Off-premise foodservices
9. Home-replacement foodservices

## Full-Service Restaurants

---

Full-service restaurants have the opportunity to offer a variety of catering services to their customers. Before any decision is made to offer these services, however, six important factors should be considered:

1. Location
2. Customer profile
3. Restaurant style or concept
4. Staffing capabilities
5. Restaurant physical layout
6. Cuisine and menu offerings

Additional material on identifying and developing these factors is discussed in Chapter Three, Catering Foodservice Development.

## LOCATION

The proximity of the restaurant to office complexes and centralized business areas will help to establish whether its catering service will be focused on business or social marketing efforts.

Businesses in the twenty-first century are spread from urban centers to suburban locations in office parks. Central urban locations offer a concentrated market for both office delivery and take-out. A significant factor in developing the market for business catering is that service is generally required during the business week, leaving weekend periods free to service social business. In addition, locations such as museums, concert halls, and historical sites offer interesting venues to catered functions for both local businesses and conventions.

Both urban and suburban restaurants can successfully develop social catering business. Suburban locations are generally more appropriate for social catering to private homes, clubs, churches, and other facilities. Delivery to urban locations can pose security and logistical problems, creating additional costs for transportation and service labor.

Population density also affects the volume of anticipated catering business. Restaurants situated in rural areas with low population density cannot expect immediate high volumes of catering business. Areas of high-density population yield a variety of catering opportunities that steadily increase in volume through referrals and reputation.

The location of the physical restaurant building plays a role in the type of catering services to be offered. Storage facilities, expansion possibilities, and access to major transportation routes are factors important to catering service production.

## CUSTOMER PROFILE

Restaurants have the advantage of a built-in customer pool to whom they can market in-house and off-premise catering services. In addition, the attraction of being associated with a restaurant's reputation will help to expand the possible market to include new business and social clients.

The market profile should classify customers as business or social catering clients, designated by income bracket. In addition the range of activities for which each customer pool will need catering services should be researched as thoroughly as possible. This will help in developing package programs along with potential menu programs and accompanying pricing concepts.

## STYLE OR CONCEPT

The style, concept, and/or theme of the restaurant should be taken into consideration when planning potential catering services. Off-premise catering services do not necessarily have to blend with the facilities offered by the restaurant. On-premise catering services should, however, be designed to function within the restaurant facilities.

## FACILITIES

Restaurants facilities are a major factor in providing on-premise catering. The ratio of catering functions to restaurant services that can be handled at a given time is dependent on the size and flexibility of the physical plant. Small private parties are often incorporated into the general dining room setting. Large parties must, however, be given facilities that are separated from the general public. The restaurant floor plan in Figure 2-1 outlines flexible catering space for a full-service restaurant operation. This restaurant has a private dining room and bar facility with a dance floor that can also be used for additional restaurant seating during busy time periods and holidays. Flexible facilities such as these allow a restaurant to maximize revenues.

Many restaurants that offer in-house catering schedule large parties, such as weddings, anniversaries, luncheons, and dinners, on days and times when the restaurant is not otherwise open. Often catering business must be refused because sufficient on-premise facilities are not available. When management is continually turning away catering business, a decision will need to be made as to how the restaurant will balance its future development of catering versus full-service dining services.

Kitchen facilities play a major part in determining when and how catering service demands can be met. Kitchen equipment must be flexible, allowing for volume production to take place simultaneously with à la carte restaurant service. The kitchen cooking load and holding capacity of ovens and auxiliary equipment is important to determine if a kitchen is to be used to its full capacity during busy times.

Storage and refrigeration facilities determine the amount of food products available at any given time. The cost of waste from food spoilage due to lack of refrigeration and freezer space could dilute the profit from additional catering business. A further discussion of equipment capability for catering service is found in Chapter Twelve.

## CUISINE AND MENU

The primary cuisine and menu offerings of a restaurant constitute one of the most important considerations for on-premise catering. As discussed earlier, off-premise catering services do not necessarily need to be the same as those offered at the restaurant for full-service dining.

Purchasing and production requirements are crucial to the successful development of catering services. On-premise catering should offer menu items that duplicate the established menu as closely as possible in order to enhance production capabilities. Surrounding items, such as vegetables and starches, are the most effective area of the menu to duplicate. Kitchen production is more efficient when the number of surrounding menu items is

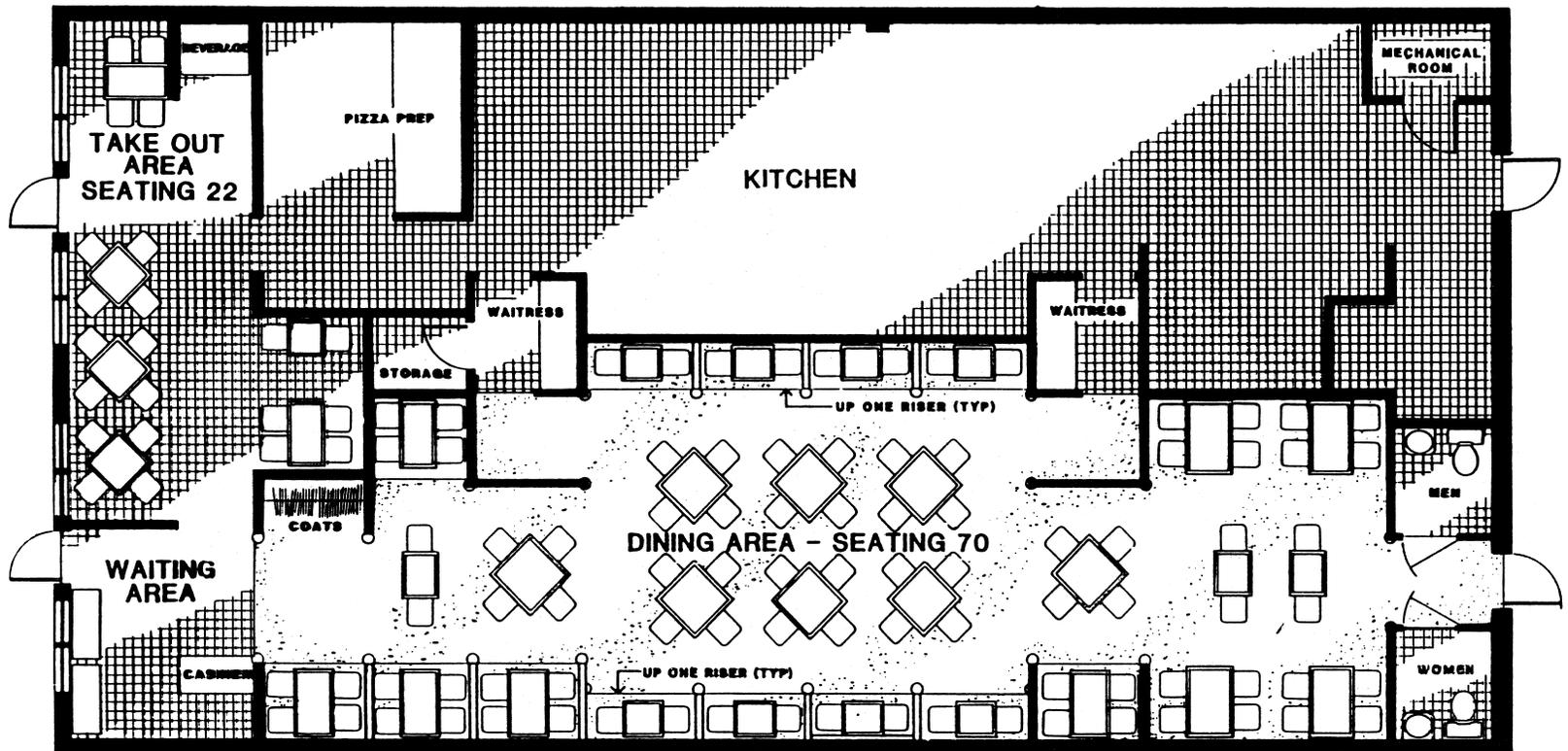


FIGURE 2-1 RESTAURANT FLOOR PLAN.

limited. Profitable and effective purchasing for catering functions requires that the ingredients for menu items be the same or similar to those on the restaurant menu. This allows the purchasing agent to place orders for maximum volume pricing and quality.

### OFF-PREMISE CATERING

The decision to participate in off-premise catering requires a thorough review of a restaurant's resources. A successful in-house catering program can lead management into perceiving that taking on the challenge of off-premise catering will not cause operational difficulties.

Several problems must be anticipated regarding the off-premise facilities in which the final production and service for functions takes place. During in-house catering functions, service staff can often work between private parties and the dining room, filling in where needed, while the kitchen staff functions as usual, having planned ahead to handle the increased production load. In order to service off-premise functions, however, a separate waitstaff needs to be scheduled. In addition, at least one member of the kitchen production staff will be assigned to the function and therefore will be unavailable to the restaurant kitchen for the time period involved for the off-premise function.

Equipment as well as food will need to be transported both to and from the off-premise function location. Hot food and cold food must be kept at specific temperatures to prevent food spoilage. A refrigerator truck may be necessary at certain times of the year. Transportation routes and problems involving traffic congestion need to be considered in the timing of deliveries.

Subcontractors may be necessary for equipment such as tables, chairs, dishes, glassware, linens, dance floors, and tents. The extent to which a restaurant commits to a full-service catering business determines the amount of extra effort required to handle the increased business. Planning for off-premise catering requires attention to detail. Contingency plans for bad weather, delays in food transportation, and the failure of on-site equipment to function properly should be established in advance so that problems can be dealt with expediently as they arise. Additional costs are incurred when solutions to these situations are not planned for in advance. Contract prices must include these contingencies or management will find that overall costs are higher than the fees charged to the customer for food and services. The off-premise catering organizational guide in Figure 2-2 offers an outline of the areas of operational concern.

### TAKE-OUT

Take-out service is the most profitable way for restaurants and catering services to increase revenues without increasing costs. Because take-out service does not require extra seating, it generally will not require an operation to expand its facilities beyond accommodating takeout customers with a pickup and waiting area. Kitchen production can plan and schedule to handle large increases in volume for short time periods. In addition, take-out does not require the additional expenses incurred by table service for glassware,

**Client:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date/Time:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Function/Theme:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**FACILITY:**  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Routing Directions: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Travel Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**LOCATION:**  
 Indoor \_\_\_\_\_ Outdoor \_\_\_\_\_  
 Loading Area \_\_\_\_\_  
 Challenges \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Square Footage \_\_\_\_\_

**Energy Sources**  
 Gas/Electric \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Water Sources: Hot \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cold \_\_\_\_\_

Lighting Availability \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Staging on Premise** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

FIGURE 2-2 OFF-PREMISE CATERING ORGANIZATIONAL GUIDE.

**Equipment on Premise**

Kitchen \_\_\_\_\_

Prep Area \_\_\_\_\_

Sinks \_\_\_\_\_

Refrigeration \_\_\_\_\_

Freezer Space \_\_\_\_\_

Range Tops \_\_\_\_\_

Ovens \_\_\_\_\_

Microwave \_\_\_\_\_

Grills \_\_\_\_\_

Indoor \_\_\_\_\_ Outdoor \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Dishwasher Availability \_\_\_\_\_

Dishwasher Location \_\_\_\_\_

Loading for Kitchen \_\_\_\_\_

**Service Area**

Banquet Boxes \_\_\_\_\_

Service Station Areas \_\_\_\_\_

Equipment on Property \_\_\_\_\_

FIGURE 2-2 (CONTINUED)

**Equipment Needs Kitchen**

Item	Source	Delivery	Cost
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

**Equipment Needs Service**

Item	Source	Delivery	Cost
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

**Tenting**

Size \_\_\_\_\_

Floor \_\_\_\_\_

Heaters/Fans \_\_\_\_\_

**Decor/Theme Accessories**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Floor Plans/Layout**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Audiovisual**

Protection Equipment \_\_\_\_\_

Screens \_\_\_\_\_

Sound \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

FIGURE 2-2 (CONTINUED)

**Energy and Power Needs**

---

---

---

**Entertainment**

Number of Performers \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Time \_\_\_\_\_

Performance Time \_\_\_\_\_

Backstage Space Requirements \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

**Food & Beverage**

Menu \_\_\_\_\_

Service Setup \_\_\_\_\_

**Staff Requirements**

Captains \_\_\_\_\_

Servers \_\_\_\_\_

Bartenders \_\_\_\_\_

**Permits/Licenses**

Food Sanitation \_\_\_\_\_

Off-Premise Beverage License \_\_\_\_\_

Special Effect/Sound Permits \_\_\_\_\_

Parking Permit \_\_\_\_\_

Event Permit \_\_\_\_\_

Occupancy Permit \_\_\_\_\_

**Insurance**

Proof of Workman's Compensation

Proof of Liability Insurance

Proof of Liquor Liability

FIGURE 2-2 (CONTINUED)

**Parking**

Guest Parking: Number of Spaces \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Restrictions \_\_\_\_\_

Valet Service Company \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Staff &amp; Equipment Parking: Number of Spaces \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Restrictions \_\_\_\_\_

Signage \_\_\_\_\_

Contracted to \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

**Restroom Facilities**

Type and Number: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

Handicapped Location \_\_\_\_\_

Signage \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency/Security Management**

Ambulance on Site \_\_\_\_\_

First Aid Location \_\_\_\_\_

Security Management Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Security Staff \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Evacuation Plan \_\_\_\_\_

Fire Exit Locations \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signage &amp; Lighting \_\_\_\_\_

**Trash Removal**

On Site \_\_\_\_\_

Contract Removal Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

FIGURE 2-2 (CONTINUED)

<p><b>Special Conditions</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Weather Contingency Plans</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
--

FIGURE 2-2 (CONTINUED)

linens, flowers, menus, and entertainment. Disposable dishes, plastic flatware, and a carrying container are the basic requirements for take-out service. Successful take-out service does, however, require planning to assure that customers receive menu items in satisfactory condition. As with the catering menu, the selection of take-out menu items should be drawn from the restaurant menu in order to maximize purchasing and production efforts.

## Hotel Food and Beverage Facilities

The hotel food and beverage department provides food-related guest services throughout a hotel, conference, or resort property. Outlets for food and beverage services can include the following:

1. Full-service restaurant
2. Coffee shop
3. Catering facilities
4. Room service
5. Recreational areas
6. Lobby area bars
7. Food market or delicatessen

Food items for these combined foodservice areas are provided from a central kitchen, with the exception of large hotel facilities where satellite kitchens provide auxiliary production and service areas. An executive chef supervises production for all areas, consulting with the manager of each foodservice area.

Of the seven food service areas, catering affords the possibility for the greatest profit, in addition to providing much-needed cash flow during periods when room sales are slow. Hotel catering services are usually classified as:

1. Business
2. Convention/conference
3. Social

The volume of catering service available to a hotel is based on the size and number of facilities that can be used for private functions as well as the availability of production and service staff and related equipment.

The primary catering market for a hotel is based on three factors:

1. Location
2. Hotel facilities
3. Customer profile

#### LOCATION

The location of a hotel determines the demand for in-house catering. In-house catering is defined as guest-related foodservice functions associated with business meetings, conferences, conventions, and social concerns.

A hotel with a remote location focuses its catering efforts on the business booked into the hotel. Resort locations often provide additional opportunities for catering services at sports facilities and landscape venues throughout the property.

A hotel with a suburban or downtown location can expect to develop a large volume of outside catering business, both business-related and social in addition to conferences and conventions. The Chicago Hilton, for example, located in downtown Chicago, breaks down its annual catering business into the following percentages:

- 65% conference/convention
- 35% outside social

The amount of combined catering business that can be handled at any one time in a hotel is based primarily on the number and size of the facilities available. The major function rooms are usually referred to as the ballroom areas. These are complemented by a series of meeting rooms, some adjacent to the main ballroom area and some located in other areas of the hotel.

The diagram in Figure 2-3 shows the variety of catering and meeting room facilities available at The Flamingo Hilton in Las Vegas, Nevada. The main facility is a ballroom that seats 1620 guests for banquets and 2400 for theater style meetings. Adjacent to the ballroom is a series of connecting function rooms. These lead to another series of rooms that begin with an open reception foyer and lead to a second ballroom area seating 600 for dinner. An open terrace area is adjacent to these rooms, offering an outdoor reception, dining, and entertainment area. Private meeting rooms are available in other locations throughout the hotel.

#### CUSTOMER PROFILE

The customer profile for hotel catering services is made up of both business and social clientele. Customers who use the hotel as a location for a two- or three-day meeting consider meal functions as part of the total meeting

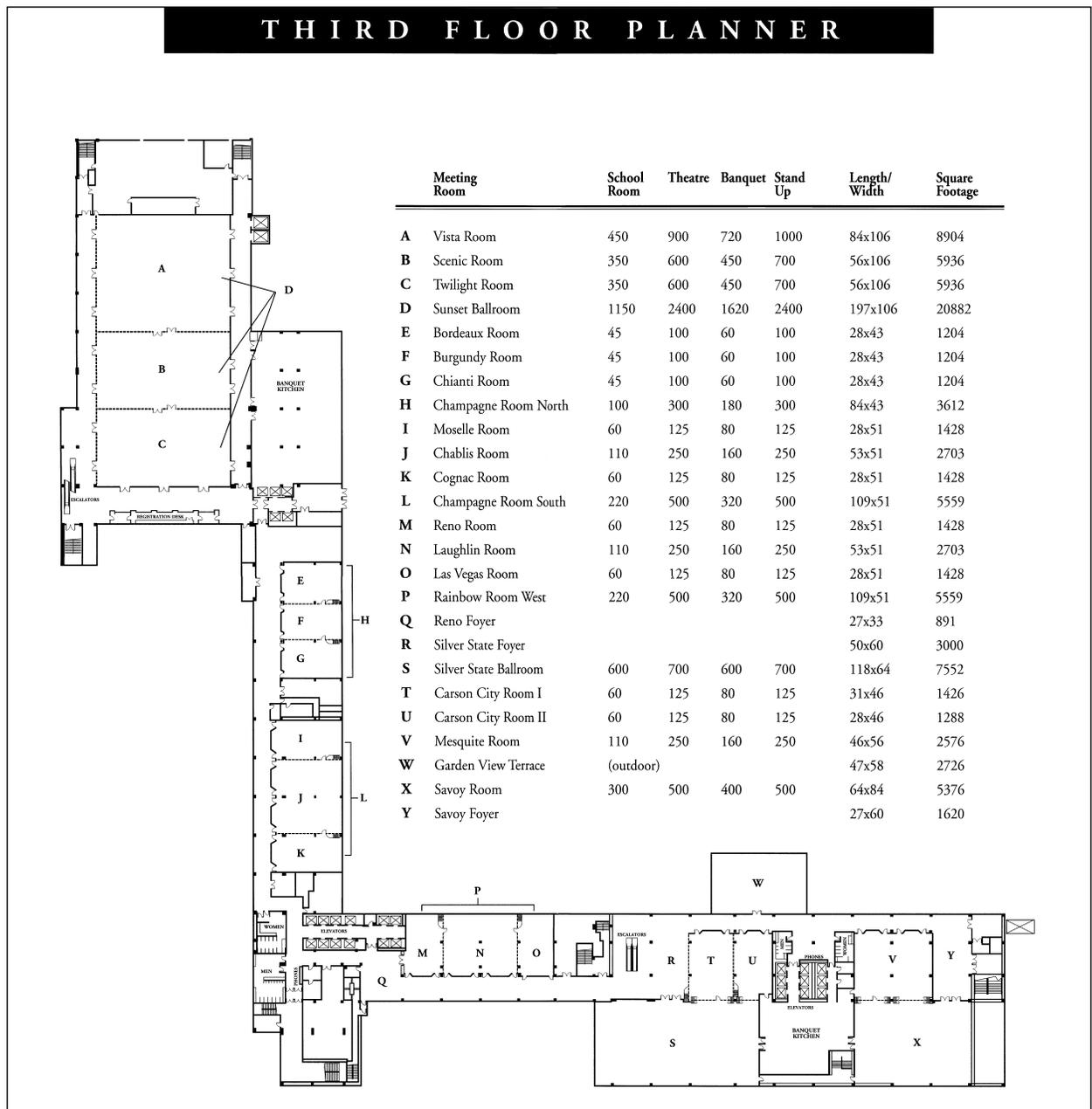


FIGURE 2-3 THE FLAMINGO HILTON'S FLOOR PLAN.

(Courtesy of the Flamingo Hilton, Las Vegas, Nevada.)

package. This arrangement not only enables customers to work within a budget that covers the entire project, but also fits with an approach to planning catering functions that considers the success of the overall meeting rather than each individual function. The catering manager is generally given the responsibility of creating a menu plan for the entire program along with theme functions and special events.

The target market for hotel catering functions is a customer who reflects the social, business, and economic profile of the community. Hotel catering

services attract a wide base of customers with a broad range of requests. Customers who plan business functions on a regular basis are familiar with the catering staff and services of the hotel. Their needs are often quickly identified and provided for. Customers who plan social functions on a one-time basis, however, need more personal guidance throughout much of the planning stage. Pricing is a primary concern of this customer group.

#### OFF-PREMISE SERVICE

Hotel food and beverage departments are often requested to handle the arrangements for functions to be held away from the hotel property. If a company wants to retain as much revenue as possible from business, convention, and social customers, an off-premise catering policy should be developed.

Using the off-premise catering organizational guide in Figure 2-2, hotel catering departments can easily develop an off-premise catering program. Often, a hotel will have the facilities in place to offer a limited menu of take-out items. Figure 2-4 shows the take-out menu from the Baur au Lac Hotel in Zurich, Switzerland. Items have been selected from the hotel dining room menu to offer to the general public on a take-away basis. Hotels have the advantage over many private catering companies of being able to use their own equipment. In addition, kitchen and storage facilities are available to handle large volumes of both food and beverage as well as equipment. If the volume of on-property business requires the use of hotel equipment, rentals can cover the additional needs, with costs being charged back to the customer.

## Catering Halls

---

A catering hall is a facility dedicated to private parties with an on-site production kitchen and staff. These facilities can offer a wide range of both in-house and off-premise catering services. The major factors that influence the market for a catering hall are:

1. Style or concept
2. Facilities
3. Customer profile

Catering halls offer customers a self-contained private function space independent of a hotel or restaurant. Many catering halls specialize in social functions such as weddings and plan the design of the landscaping and building to accent such functions. This design is also often aimed at a particular segment of the customer market, depending on location of the hall and the density and ethnic background of the surrounding population.

Catering halls can also specialize in large functions, providing space for groups that cannot normally be accommodated in other facilities. Such halls are generally designed to host a wide range of social and business functions and a variety of special event themes.

<i>Entrées froides</i>		p.p.	<i>Entrées froides</i>		p.p.
Viande séchée des Grisons.....	Fr. 26.00		Caviar Oscière Malossol .....	100g	Fr. 125.00
Régal des Grisons (viande séchée, jambon cru, salsiz)...	Fr. 20.00		Cocktail de crevettes (préparé avec sauce gourmet) .....		Fr. 19.00
Foie gras de Strasbourg.....	Fr. 34.00		Cocktail de homard (préparé avec sauce gourmet) .....		Fr. 51.00
Mousse de foie gras.....	Fr. 25.00		Aiguillette de saumon moderne (garnie oeuf fourré, pointes d'asperges, concombres farci, sauce verte) .....		Fr. 27.00
Melon (selon saison).....	Prix du jour		Saumon fumé Frédéric (garni: oignons, câpres, olives, citron, raifort Chantilly) .....		Fr. 25.00
Salade de poulet.....	Fr. 21.00		Truite fumée (garnie: oignons, câpres, olives, citron, raifort Chantilly) .....		Fr. 19.00
Viandes froides assorties.....	Fr. 24.00		Anguille fumée (garnie: oignons, câpres, olives, citron, raifort Chantilly) .....		Fr. 19.00
Salade niçoise.....	Fr. 19.00		Langouste montée parisienne (garnie: demi oeuf au caviar, pointes d'asperges, fond d'artichaut)		
Salade composée.....	Fr. 11.00		minimum 10 médaillons .....		Prix du jour
Tartare de saumon crû ou et fumé.....	Fr. 25.00				
Salade de fruits de mer vietnamienne.....	Fr. 23.00				
Vitello tonnato.....	Fr. 25.00				
Roastbeef froid jardinière.....	Fr. 28.00				
<b>Barbecue et buffet de salades</b> à partir de 30 personne			<b>Potages et consommés</b>		
Sélections de salades de saison et sa garniture, sauce et salades			p.p.		
Grillades, sauces et beurre à votre désir <b>Prix selon votre choix</b>			Crème d'asperges .....		
			Fr. 12.00		
<b>Spécialités asiatiques</b> (minimum 6 personnes) p.p.			Bisque d'homard à l'estragon .....		
Rouleaux de sushi japonais et californien			Fr. 17.00		
Fr. 45.00			Consommé aux ravioli de ricotta à l'épinard .....		
Rouleaux de langoustines aux vermicelles de riz vietnamien			Fr. 12.00		
Sauce cacahuètes et soja aux piments rouges			Essence de queue de boeuf au sherry .....		
			Fr. 13.00		
Rouleaux de printemps aux légumes et pousses de soja			Potage Mulligatawny .....		
Sauce aigre-doux			Fr. 12.00		
			Gazpacho ou Vichyssoise (en été seulement) .....		
			Fr. 12.00		

<b>Buffet Campagnard</b>	<b>Buffet chaud et froid</b>
à Fr. 70.-- par personne, à partir de 20 personnes	à Fr. 80.00 par personne, à partir de 20 personnes
	<b>Froid:</b>
Bouillon aux dés de moelle, croûtons	Crevettes en sauce gourmet
Saucisson en brioche	Mousse de foie gras
Jambon en pâte à pain	Panaché des Grisons
Carré de veau rôti primeurs	Truite, anguille, saumon fumés
Boeuf bouilli vinaigrette	Roastbeef froid
Plateau de fromages	Cornet de jambon à la mousse de volaille
Salades de pommes de terre, tomates, concombre et haricots verts	Terrine de poisson
Raifort Chantilly et sauce tartare	
Tartes aux fruits de la saison	<b>Chaud:</b>
Meringue et crème double	Ragoût de fruits de mer au Pernod
	Célestine de volaille Devonshire
	Train de côte de porc rôti
	Filet goulache Stroganoff
	Riz, nouilles
	<b>Entremets:</b>
	Crème caramel
	Mousse au chocolat
	Tarte aux fruits de la saison
	Glace vanille
	Salade de fruits
	Mignardises

FIGURE 2-4 THE BAUR AU LAC HOTEL'S TAKE-OUT MENU.

(Courtesy of The Baur au Lac Hotel, Zurich, Switzerland.)

## FACILITIES

The flexibility, and often the originality, of function spaces are important to the success of a catering hall. Customers will travel considerable distances to social functions held in facilities that offer a unique setting or experience. Wedding receptions are often planned in locations over an hour away from the site of the ceremony so that the bride and groom can have a specific setting for their reception. The Del Coronado Hotel ballroom, seen in Figure 3-2, offers not only a beautiful and historic interior but a view of the Pacific Ocean as well. Annual social functions are constantly looking for new or different themes to draw attendees. Catering halls can provide the setting for special event themes ranging from futuristic to country western, offering menu and entertainment packages to match.

## CUSTOMER PROFILE

The customer target market for catering halls, like hotels, is based on the social, business, and economic profile of the community. Catering halls, also like hotels, are available in a variety of price venues, generally appealing to customers who are looking for menu and function packages within a specific range of prices. Identifying a customer group toward which to target marketing efforts includes surveying the competition, establishing a price range, and determining specific geographic areas of the community in which potential customers live based on demographic information such as annual income, family size, and age. Chapter Three suggests methods of conducting market surveys and identifying customer profiles.

## OFF-PREMISE CATERING

Catering halls have a great deal of flexibility regarding the type of business that they can solicit. The amount of off-premise catering that can be handled by an operation is limited only by the ability to service it. Location, transportation routes, and population density play a major role in determining this segment of the business. The ability to transport food and equipment and provide service and production staff are other limiting factors. Figure 2-2 outlines a checklist for organizing off-premise events.

# Independent Caterers

---

Independent caterers are private businesses offering catering services to the general public. These businesses operate with or without permanent facilities of their own in which to hold functions. Those caterers who operate without a formal facility must arrange for kitchen production and storage space. Kitchen space can be rented from schools, churches, senior citizen centers, and other institutional facilities with commercial refrigeration and production space. Storage space can be arranged for in self-storage warehouse rental facilities that combine short-term leases with flexible storage space and 24-hour access. Some catering companies have their own production facilities and enough warehouse space to handle large volumes of business.

Chairs, floor covering, tables, and the table setup necessary for large functions are either sourced from a catering company's own warehouse or contracted through a local rental supplier. Many independent caterers focus on off-premise catering, maintaining only a small catering hall with limited facilities to house their production and storage needs. Their focus is on both business and social functions within a wide geographical area. In order to successfully cater to as many functions as possible simultaneously, a catering company has to be extremely well organized. Although equipment needs, staffing, and transportation are major concerns, the primary product, food, is the most important issue.

### MENU DUPLICATION

The key to successfully providing catering services to a number of functions simultaneously is the duplication of as many of the menu items as possible in order to minimize kitchen production. All surrounding items, salads, and desserts can be standardized. The main course selection should be limited to three or four items on any given day if possible. Menu items should be chosen for their ability to be precooked for completion in another location. Foods should have excellent holding properties and retain heat. An example of an independent caterer's menu selection for a busy Sunday is shown in Figure 2-5.

This menu offers one appetizer, one salad and two choices of dessert. Dessert #2 is a chocolate dessert shell filled with frozen yogurt that can be preassembled or purchased frozen and transported to function locations within reasonable proximity to the main function kitchen. The gateau chocolate is contracted from an outside baking source, as are the breads. Whipped cream is served with the cake using a high-quality product from aerosol containers.

The main course offers a choice of two meats, one poultry, and one fish. All four of these items fulfill the requirements for preproduction and holding properties. Two vegetables selections are offered, one appropriate for the meat dishes and one better-suited for the poultry and fish, but acceptable for any of the main course selections. Standardization procedures such as these minimize the problems of serving multiple parties in off-premise settings and ensure that food presentation is of the best possible quality.

## Private Clubs

---

Private clubs offer a self-contained facility that operates both full-service dining rooms and private function space along with a variety of food and beverage outlets. Private clubs are generally dependent on their membership for both dining room and catering business. Functioning as nonprofit organizations, clubs are, in many areas, prohibited by law from accepting or soliciting business from nonmembers. If such is the case private clubs may, however, cater functions that are sponsored by members and attended by nonmembers, allowing them to service both social and business activities.



FIGURE 2-5 OFF-PREMISE MENU SELECTION FOR A BUSY SUNDAY.

Factors that influence the success of restaurant and hotel catering services, such as location, facilities, and customer profile, also affect private clubs. Off-premise catering services can also be offered to private club members.

Private clubs may also contract out their foodservice operation to a contract foodservice operator. An example of this type of arrangement is The Colonial Inn, Concord, Massachusetts, and the local country club. The

management of The Colonial Inn turned to the local country club as a source of both kitchen production space and private function rooms. The Inn itself, a historic property located in the middle of a crowded town, has no available adjacent property on which to develop additional catering facilities.

As a vehicle to increase their food and beverage revenues without incurring capital expenditures, the catering management team had identified a market for off-premise catering in the suburban Boston area adjacent to Concord. Without additional kitchen production space, however, the project could not go forward. In addition, during heavy business periods throughout the year, the Inn could not accommodate all of the requests that they received for private functions on property.

Through an arrangement with the local country club, management now not only has a satellite kitchen in a nearby facility but can also lease function space from the club on an as available/as needed basis. This alliance creates revenues and capitalizes on the needs of The Colonial Inn and the facilities of the club. A sample of the menu from The Colonial Inn is seen in Figure 2-6.

### LOCATION

Clubs are broken down into two general classifications: private clubs and country clubs. Private clubs are generally situated in the downtown areas of larger towns and cities. The club facility is used primarily as a location for meetings, private dining, social and business functions. Country clubs require a suburban location and usually promote a combination of golf, tennis, and/or boating as their primary recreational facilities. Private dining and catering facilities are located in the clubhouse.

Acceptability of location is based primarily on general location and accessibility to major transportation routes. Downtown city locations can create problems regarding parking and security for people traveling into the city.

### FACILITIES

Club facilities can greatly influence the volume of catering business. Clubs offering spectacular settings, access to garden areas for outdoor functions, or well designed interiors, such as seen in Figure 2-7, will easily attract social business.

### OFF-PREMISE CATERING

A club's ability to accept off-premise catering function business is controlled by the same laws and regulations as the solicitation of nonmember business. Beyond these restrictions, the same considerations for restaurants and hotels concerning transportation, staffing, production, and service apply. The outline in Figure 2-2 suggests the operational considerations for off-premise catering for the majority of food and beverage operations. While the general specifications apply to almost everyone, each business will need to create specifications in each operational area according to its individual needs, availability of services, and budgets.

*We cordially invite you  
to share your wedding day  
with us*

*Cocktail Reception  
White Glove Service*

*Open bar with attendants throughout your function for three hours  
serving name brand liquors, our house wines, champagne and beer*

***A Fancy Selection of Hot Hors d'Oeuvres***

*(Choice of Three)*

*Caviar with Toast Points*

*Scallops wrapped in Bacon*

*Smoked Salmon Canapes*

*Teriyaki Sesame Beef Brochettes*

*Water Chestnuts and Snow Peas wrapped in Bacon*

*Chicken Satay with Peanut Ginger Sauce*

*Crab and Spinach Stuffed Mushroom Caps*

*Vegetable Egg Rolls*

*Chesapeake Crab Cakes*

*Goat Cheese Croustade*

*Petit Quiches*

*Spanakopita*

***Presented From a Skirted Table***

*Deluxe International Cheese Display on a Mirrored Platter*

*complemented with Crackers and Fruit*

*Fancy Crudite Display with House Dip*

***Chafing Dish Selections***

*Choice of one:*

*Swedish Meatballs*

*Chicken Marsala*

*Stir Fry Vegetables*

*Ratatouille Crepes*

*Chicken Etouffee*

*Stew of Wild Mushrooms with Fresh Thyme and Polenta*

***Pasta Station***

*Choose two pastas prepared in the room by a pasta chef*

FIGURE 2-6 SAMPLE OF THE COLONIAL INN'S CATERING MENU.  
(Courtesy of The Colonial Inn, Concord, Massachusetts.)

### ***Appetizers***

<i>New England Clam Chowder</i>	
<i>Beef Minestrone</i>	
<i>Fresh Fruit Compote with Maple Yogurt Dressing</i>	
<i>Rainbow Tortellini with Peas and Prosciutto</i>	
<i>(Available at an Additional Cost)</i>	
<i>Presentation of Chilled Shrimps with Cocktail Sauce</i>	\$7.25 pp
<i>Seafood Vol Au Vent</i>	\$6.75 pp
<i>Smoked Salmon with Champagne Salad &amp; Toast Points</i>	\$7.25 pp

### ***Salads***

<i>Traditional Caesar Salad</i>
<i>Mixed Field of Greens with Raspberry Walnut Vinaigrette</i>
<i>Arugula Salad with Goat Cheese</i>

### ***Intermezzo***

*Fresh Lemon Sorbet in a Lemon Shell*

### ***Entrees***

<i>Roast Breast of Chicken with choice of one Sauce:</i>	\$95.00 pp
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Green Peppercorn &amp; Brandy Sauce</i></li> <li>• <i>Fresh Herb &amp; Zinfandel Cream</i></li> <li>• <i>Farragon Asparagus Cream</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Teriyaki Sesame Glaze</i></li> <li>• <i>Green Grape Chardonnay Cream</i></li> <li>• <i>Three Citrus Glaze</i></li> </ul>
<i>Duet Plate: Roast Tenderloin of Beef with Brandied Mushroom Sauce,</i>	
<i>served with one of the following:</i>	\$105.00 pp
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Half Chicken Breast with One of the Above Sauces</i></li> <li>• <i>Broiled Salmon with Lobster Caviar Cream</i></li> <li>• <i>Seafood Mousse Stuffed Shrimp</i></li> </ul>	
<i>Roast Tenderloin of Beef with Brandied Mushroom Sauce</i>	\$110.00 pp
<i>Oven Poached Salmon with Snowcrab, Asparagus and Bernaise Sauce</i>	\$108.00 pp
<i>Roast Prime Rib of Beef with Cracked Pepper Jus</i>	\$110.00 pp
<i>Sauteed Medallions of Veal with Raspberry Cream</i>	\$110.00 pp

*All entrees are accompanied by Rolls and Butter, Potato or Rice, and the Freshest Vegetable of the Season  
Coffee, Tea, Decaffeinated Coffee*

### ***Dessert***

*Fruit Tarts  
Chocolate Dipped Fruit Kabobs  
Selection of Miniature Pastries  
Vanilla Ice Cream and Strawberry Sauce  
Dark Chocolate or Fruit Mousse*

*Please note: Above price per person includes entire package.*

*Above prices do not include 5% Massachusetts sales tax and 19% Service Charges*

12/97

FIGURE 2-6 (CONTINUED)



FIGURE 2-7 CLUB FACILITIES.  
(Courtesy of The Chicago Club, Chicago, Illinois.)

## Contract Feeding

---

Contract feeding companies provide institutions such as hospitals and schools, as well as businesses, with in-house meal programs designed to meet specific needs. Food production and service is contracted for long-term periods with designated budget restrictions.

The contract feeding segment of the foodservice industry has been steadily growing since the late 1980s. Major corporations such as Marriott International created large contract feeding companies to service a wide range of customers. In the late 1990s a separate company, Host Marriott, was created and now operates independently of Marriott International, serving institutional customers internationally.

As food costs have increased and available labor decreased, institutions and businesses have turned to outside contractors to operate their foodservice programs. In most cases, these programs function as a service to either patients, clients, or employees; they are subsidized benefits, not profit making operations. By using a professional contract foodservice operator to handle this area of operations, businesses find that the quality of service increases significantly along with client and employee satisfaction.

The major factors that can influence the success of catering services within a contract feeding location are:

1. Facilities
2. Customer profile

## FACILITIES

Contract feeding can be offered in a wide variety of dining room and catering facilities. The type and number of facilities that can be used for function spaces within a business or institutional setting will help to determine the volume of in-house catering. Catering functions in these settings are usually business related, but open area spaces can be used by private groups for social functions.

## CUSTOMER PROFILE

Identifying the customer profile for large and diverse groups of people in a business situation is initially done by job classification level. Private dining room service and business meeting menu selections should be based on the expectations associated with the job levels of the people who attend these functions.

The types of food products that will be popular in a cafeteria area depend on the profile of the employee population group. The proximity of the business to an urban center and the general education level of the customer group, along with local and regional food preferences and subsidy budgets, determine the range of food products offered.

## OFF-PREMISE CATERING

Contract feeding companies working for a business or institution are often called upon to produce foodservice functions in off-premise locations. The organizational principles outlined in Figure 2-2 apply as equally to contract feeding operations as to restaurants and catering companies.

# Charcuteries and Delicatessens

---

Charcuteries are food stores that offer take-out foodservice along with gourmet food products. Many of these products are used as ingredients in the preparation of the food line. In some cases a small seating area will be offered for eat-in customers. The trend for home-replacement food is significant to this type of operation. When customers want something beyond fast food for a take-home meal, they turn to establishments that can provide meals that they would like to have prepared for themselves. Home-replacement food is being provided in a number of types of foodservice facilities, including upscale supermarkets.

This type of foodservice operation usually specializes in a regional or national cuisine. Menu items range from salads and sandwiches to fully prepared meals. The success of a charcuterie depends on two major factors: location and customer profile.

## LOCATION

Charcuteries should be located where the customer profile supports the level of cuisine offered. Pricing for this type of foodservice operation is generally

higher than that of delicatessens and supermarket preprepared and packaged food items; hence it requires a customer base willing to pay for gourmet food products. Smaller independent caterers often operate out of this type of retail outlet, using the facility for both production and storage in addition to a means of advertising and promotion. Delicatessens are food stores that provide a variety of food products and offer both eat-in and take-out food service. The location should be reasonably close to the targeted customer base. Menu item offerings range from sandwiches, salads, and pizza to preprepared meals-to-go. Take-out foodservice of preprepared foods is a major business segment for this type of foodservice operation.

#### CUSTOMER PROFILE

The profile of customers for a charcuterie/delicatessen operation is drawn largely from the demographics of the population in the immediate area of the business. Primary customers can be identified as either employees of adjacent businesses or local area residents. A customer profile is determined for each of the two primary customer groups. For example, the twice a week business customer, with an average check of five to six dollars, could be in the mid-20s to 40s age group and low to middle income bracket. The local resident profile, with an average check of twelve dollars or more two times a week, may be in the mid-30s to 50s age group, middle to upper income bracket. Further investigation may show that the business employee is a morning coffee and lunch customer while the local resident is an evening customer for home-replacement meals.

#### OFF-PREMISE CATERING

Delivery of in-office and at-home preprepared food items can be a profitable extension of a delicatessen's business. From packaged lunches to party trays and platters, delicatessens often provide off-premise food items on a daily basis to a wide range of customers. The off-premise menu for Einstein Bagels is shown in Figure 2-8. This menu capitalizes on the restaurant's bagel bakery while also promoting salads, sandwiches, and desserts. Seating for these restaurants is generally limited due to their location in high rent districts. Marketing take-out and delivery services creates revenues without significantly increasing costs.

## Summary

---

The opportunities for foodservice operations to offer catering services are many and varied. Catering management in the 2000s will continue to expand in both volume and diversity as the demand for ready-to-serve preprepared foods increases.

The ability of a foodservice operation to successfully offer catering services will be affected by a variety of factors. Location, customer profile, facilities, and menu offerings, along with style or concept, are some of the factors that must be considered before deciding which catering services to offer.

**fancy schmancy catering**  
ESTABLISHED 1998

CASUAL CATERING FOR MEETINGS AND GET-TOGETHERS

[www.einsteinbros.com](http://www.einsteinbros.com)

## SALAD BOX LUNCHES

SERVED WITH OUR FLATBREADS

**CHICKEN CAESAR SALAD**  
with bagel croutons  
Mini Bagel Caesar served with our zaiqa & rosemary flavored and one huge cookie. \$13.99 *Without Chicken \$4.58*

**BROS BISTRO\***  
Mini Bagel Green salad with our zaiqa vinaigrette, candied walnuts & gorgonzola cheese served with our zaiqa & rosemary flavored and one huge cookie. \$6.95

**ASIAN CHICKEN**  
All white meat chicken breast, rice noodles, mini bagel green, zaiqa veggie, peanut & chow mein noodles with low fat asian sesame dressing served with our peanut sesame flavored and one huge cookie. \$7.95

**MAKE IT A MEAL**

**SIDE SALADS FOR GROUPS**  
Our **BBQ DOLI POPPYSEED COLESLAW**  
**POTATO SALAD**  
Your choice of Side Salad served family style.  
Serves 8-10 \$17.50

**A LITTLE SWEET**  
**COOKIE VARIETY BOX**  
8 dozen assortment of our huge cookies packed in a neat tote box.  
Serves 16-21 \$14.99

**HALF-DOZEN SWEETS**  
Four choice of any combination of 6 Brownies, Rice Crispy Treats or Poundcake slices. \$9.99

\*See Menu for a complete list of our Side Salads

# BOX LUNCHES

EACH BOX LUNCH INCLUDES UTENSILS, NAPKINS & CONDIMENTS. ALL SANDWICHES SERVED WITH CHIPS, KOSHER PICKLE SPREAD AND ONE HUGE COOKIE.

Add a side salad of your choice! Peppered Chicken or Roast Beef for \$1.99.

## SPECIALTY BAGEL SANDWICHES

<p><b>TRADITIONAL DELI</b> Four choice of 99% Fat free Turkey Pastrami, Smoked Turkey, Ham, Tuna or Chicken Salad with Cheese, Lettuce &amp; Tomato...\$6.95 <i>with a side salad \$7.95</i></p> <p><b>"HOLEY" COW*</b> Medium Rare Shaved Top Round of Beef, Cheddar Cheese, Zesty Horseradish Sauce, Lettuce &amp; Tomato...\$7.50 <i>with a side salad \$8.50</i></p> <p><b>THE TASTY TURKEY</b> Smoked Turkey, Onion &amp; Chive Cream Cheese, Lettuce, Tomato, Sprouts &amp; Cucumber...\$7.95 <i>with a side salad \$8.95</i></p>	<p><b>THE VEG OUT!*</b> Reduced Fat Garden of Eatin' Cream Cheese Spread, Feta Pine Nut Spread, Sprouts, Lettuce, Cucumber, Tomato &amp; Marinated Cream...\$6.50 <i>with a side salad \$7.50</i></p> <p><b>MEDITERRANEAN HUMMOS &amp; PETA*</b> Hummus and Feta Pine Nut Spread, Roasted Red Peppers, Tomatoes, Red Onion &amp; Cucumber...\$6.50 <i>with a side salad \$7.50</i></p> <p><b>NY LOX &amp; BAGELS</b> Smoked Salmon on a Bagel with Plain Cream Cheese, Tomato, Sweet Onion &amp; Capers...\$8.50 <i>with a side salad \$9.50</i></p>
---	--

## CHALLAH SANDWICHES

**THE COBBIE\***  
Smoked Turkey & Peppered Bacon with Avocado Spread, Lettuce, Red Onion, Tomato & Gorgonzola Mayo...\$7.95  
*with a side salad \$8.95*

**CLUB MEX**  
Traditional Club with Peppered Bacon, Pepper Jack Cheese, Tomato, Lettuce, Red Onion and a Zesty Archo Lime Mayo...\$7.95  
*with a side salad \$8.95*

## BAGUETTE SANDWICHES

**HAM & SMOKED GOUDA**  
Ham, Smoked Gouda, Tomatoes, Mini Bagel Green\* and Raspberry Grain Mustard...\$7.95 *with a side salad \$8.95*

**ROASTED CHICKEN & SMOKED GOUDA**  
All White Meat Chicken Breast, Smoked Gouda, Tomatoes, and Mini Bagel Green\* served with Raspberry Grain Mustard...\$7.95 *with a side salad \$8.95*

**OUR BIG HERO**  
Smoked Turkey, Ham & Pepperoni, Provolone Cheese, Mini Bagel Green\*, Tomato, Pimento Red Onions and Roasted Red Pepper with Balsamic Vinaigrette...\$7.95  
*with a side salad \$8.95*

FIGURE 2-8 OFF-PREMISE MENU FOR EINSTEIN BAGELS.  
(Courtesy of The Einstein Bagel Corp.)

Off-premise catering can be very successful for independent caterers and problematic for full-service restaurants. Equipment and resources are the factors that will often determine how well an operation can conduct off-premise catering.

The availability of catering services is limited only by the ability of foodservice operations to provide them. Whether in the executive dining room of a large corporation or at a garden wedding, it is possible for foodservice operators from five star hotels to delicatessens to provide quality food and service.

